

Bashir's crimes are well-known and documented. This is the same man that is accused by the International Criminal Court of five counts of crimes against humanity, including murder, rape, torture, extermination, and two counts of war crimes.

I've been to Sudan five times, including in July 2004 when Senator Sam Brownback and I were the first congressional delegation to go to Darfur. We spoke with women who had been raped just days earlier.

The Arab janjaweed militias, armed by Khartoum, told these women that they wanted to make "lighter skinned babies."

In addition to horrific human rights abuses and crimes committed by Bashir and his National Congress Party (NCP), Sudan remains on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. It is well known that the same people currently in control in Khartoum gave safe haven to Osama bin Laden in the early 1990s. Moreover, Khartoum was a revolving door for Hamas and other designated terrorist groups.

But Bashir's crimes are not merely at the top of the past as we will hear in greater detail today. At a recent Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on the crisis in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states in Sudan, former Member of Congress and President of United to End Genocide, Tom Andrews, spoke about his experiences while visiting the region.

He said that there were reports of, "Sudanese armed forces and their allied militias going door to door targeting people based upon their religion, and based upon the color of their skin."

Let me repeat that . . . people were being targeted for killing based upon their religion and the color of their skin.

According to the USCIRF delegation that recently visited Sudan and met with refugees in Yida camp, all of the pastors with whom they spoke said they fled Southern Kordofan after learning that the Sudanese military was undertaking house searches for Christians and SPLM-N supporters.

If this were happening in southern France, the world would be outraged. The world would take action. And yet, this story rarely features above the fold.

We stand just blocks from a museum that cries out "Never Again." Meanwhile, it appears that this administration is complicit in allowing the genocidaire Bashir an advocate in Washington.

Which begs the question, who lobbies for the people whose faces are represented in this room?

Yesterday I wrote the president along with the Departments of State Treasury and Justice requesting immediate clarification about this matter and will continue to press them—just as I have done during previous administrations.

I am submitting this correspondence and relevant information into the Congressional Record for all to see.

We must not be silent in the face of this injustice.

If President Obama, Secretary Clinton and Secretary Geithner stand by and allow this to happen, history will be their judge.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA—PRINCE WILLIAM

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th Anniversary of

Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William.

Founded in 1991 by local librarian Dona Swanson to help teach a library patron to read, Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has since grown to 300 volunteers and 600 students. Despite its impressive growth, LVA-PW has maintained its direct service approach, providing individualized adult literacy tutoring based on the personal needs and goals of adult learners seeking to improve their education and employment skills. LVA-PW's programs are well-researched and constantly tracked and evaluated by staff to ensure their effectiveness. This has proven to be a highly successful model; in 2010, LVA-PW's adult learners received a total of 12,000 hours of instruction, with nearly 80% achieving at least one of their personal goals.

Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has established itself as an institution in the community, fostering local partnerships to strengthen both their own services and those of other community groups, including the Prince William County Library System, the Virginia Employment Center, Northern Virginia Community College, the Prince William County Adult Education Program, and local businesses through workplace literacy programs. Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William has additionally been recognized in the past as Community Service Organization of the Year by the Prince William Regional Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Organization of the Quarter by Prince William County, and Friday's Hero by the local Channel 9 News. Most recently, LVA-PW Executive Director Kim Sells received the Nancy Jiranek Award for Outstanding Virginia Adult Literacy Executive Director from the Virginia Literacy Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the 20th Anniversary of Literacy Volunteers of America—Prince William. I also express my gratitude to LVA-PW's volunteer tutors and trainers, Board of Directors, and staff for helping to empower members of the community by increasing life skills and workforce potential through literacy.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3630, MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this closed rule, particularly because it does not allow for a Democratic substitute for critical year end legislation.

In a Democratic substitute we would have included a permanent repeal of the flawed physician payment formula in Medicare replacing it with a ten-year freeze. Each year members promise to look into this formula and address it—to provide certainty and stability for America's seniors in accessing their doctors. The House passed health reform bill did exactly that. Unfortunately it did not become law, but the Republicans did not even try to solve this problem. They did not offer legislation or have markups. The Republican bill punts the question for another 2 years.

In a Democratic substitute we would have included the Wireless Innovation and Public Safety Broadband Act that Representatives ESHOO and I sponsored. It keeps many of the same policy goals as the Republican legislation, but it would not undermine public safety by erecting a faulty governance model for a public safety broadband network, nor would it mandate the premature return of spectrum utilized for mission critical voice communications. The substitute also would have allowed the FCC necessary discretion to preserve unlicensed spectrum uses that preserve innovation and benefit consumers as well as protect consumers from monopolies.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not have included the poison pill of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline provision.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be asking modest income seniors and individuals with disabilities to foot the bill for tax relief—that's just robbing Peter to pay Paul. Seniors making over \$85,000 a year are already paying more for Medicare. High income earners already pay more all their lives for Medicare through the Medicare payroll tax which has no cap. The changes in the Republican bill restructure the Medicare program in problematic ways to pay for short term extensions.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be creating an additional 170,000 uninsured people by increasing costs on working class individuals through the health care tax credit and subsidies in the Affordable Care Act.

In a Democratic substitute, we would not be taking the shortsighted step of reducing our commitment to public health and prevention activities. These activities help to prevent diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and obesity and can lower healthcare costs over the long run.

The Democratic substitute would be a fair extension of important programs and would be paid for by the withdrawal and downsizing of troops overseas through the overseas contingency fund.

MARKING THE END OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of this great day in American history—the day that marks the end of the Iraq war. Although for years we all hoped and prayed that this day would come, there is an overwhelming feeling of relief when hope becomes a reality. Today we stand together as a nation and rejoice as we look forward to the return of thousands of men and women whose countless sacrifices, remarkable service, and enormous achievements in the name of our great Nation will never be forgotten.

Nearly 1.5 million Americans served in the war in Iraq, with 30,000 wounded and nearly 4,500 casualties. In my district, we suffered the loss of 12 remarkable servicemen. We remember Long Beach residents: Pfc. Stephen A. Castellano; Sgt. 1st Class Randy D. Collins; Sgt. Anthony J. Davis, Jr.; Sgt. Israel Garcia; Pvt. Ernesto R. Guerra; Pfc. Lyndon A. Marcus, Jr.; Spec. Roberto L. Martinez Salazar; Spec. Astor A. SunsinPineda; Pfc.

David T. Toomalatai; Pfc. George D. Torres; and Staff Sgt. Joshua Whitaker, as well as Carson resident Pfc. Daniel P. Cagle of Carson who were all killed in action.

Perhaps the most consequential victory of the War on Terror came earlier this year when Osama bin Laden's life was finally ended by a group of Navy SEALs who deftly carried-out a covert operation at bin Laden's secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. I am extremely thankful for President Obama and his Administration's firm leadership in the effort to bring bin Laden to justice. With a renewed sense that justice has been served, we must return our focus now to protecting our citizens at home, and assuring our veterans a prosperous future.

As President Obama said earlier today "It's important for us to express our thanks in words, but it's even more for us to express our thanks in deeds." It is now our turn to stand up for our troops at home as they courageously stood up for us in battle.

Our troops are returning home to a tough economy. They are returning home to an unemployment rate for veterans that is 2.5% higher than the national average. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to put aside our differences and come together in our commitment to ensure veterans returning home receive all the resources they need. No measure of action we take in Congress can ever truly repay our troops for their sacrifices, but I vow to do all that I can to ensure that the country they fought and sacrificed for gives back to them all that they deserve.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, while keeping the American people safe should always be our top priority, now we must refocus our priorities and our resources into protecting our homeland, educating, training and employing the American workforce, and ensuring our veterans a prosperous future in the nation they fought to defend. Over the last ten years, American taxpayers have spent billions rebuilding Iraq. We must now be willing to make the same investment of time and resources to rebuild our economy so that it provides a standard of living and quality of life worthy of the heroic sacrifices made by the men and women who risked their lives to defend our way of life and freedom.

RECOGNIZING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 200th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia.

Freemasonry has been active in the United States for over two hundred and fifty years. Since its founding in 1811, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia has encouraged interaction and discourse among individuals of differing beliefs by promoting community service, civic responsibility, and civil debate.

The Grand Lodge of D.C. has participated in the development and strengthening of our na-

tional institutions of government, including the United States Congress and Judiciary, Presidency, and Executive Branch Agencies, as well as the Capital's historic landmarks such as the White House, Smithsonian Institution, Washington Monument, and Washington National Cathedral. The Grand Lodge of D.C. has been greatly involved with the enrichment of Washington, D.C., with members establishing prominent institutions such as the Corcoran Gallery and George Washington University, and has been actively engaged in charitable projects. The Masonic Foundation of DC has provided tens of thousands of dollars each year in financial scholarships to college students who attended D.C. public schools. Participation in numerous community service projects include Hands on DC, Adams Morgan Day, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Doctors Without Borders, So Others May Eat, St. Baldrick's Foundation for childhood cancer research, DC Community of Hope, DC Central Kitchen, and DC Special Olympics.

The Grand Lodge of D.C. has been involved domestically and abroad in countries such as Armenia, Cuba, and the Philippines. It also hosted the 2008 World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges, the largest gathering of Masonic leaders in history, to discuss ways to build a global civil society.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia. For 200 years, the Grand Lodge of D.C. has supported the Freemasonry founding principles of "Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth," and continues to do so today, supporting the American ideal that individuals can coexist peacefully and come together to form a community, regardless of background and differences.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1905, the Iran Threat Reduction Act.

I thank Chairwoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member BERMAN for crafting this important, bipartisan bill. H.R. 1905 was reported out of the Foreign Affairs Committee by voice vote and comes to the floor with over 350 cosponsors—of which I am one.

We must make it clear to Iran that any pursuit of a nuclear weapons program is unacceptable. This bill is designed to significantly strengthen the hand of the Obama Administration in applying economic pressure on the Iranian regime.

Specifically, the bill targets Iran's petroleum sector by expanding the activities that could trigger sanctions to include making certain petroleum resource agreements with Iran. It also requires the President, subject to a national security waiver, to impose sanctions on entities doing business with the Central Bank of Iran if he determines the Central Bank is linked to the Iranian nuclear program. The

measure also requires entities filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission to disclose business ties with Iran.

By most accounts, the sanctions passed by Congress last year have ratcheted up pressure on the Iranian government. But Iran continues to increase its stockpile of enriched uranium. This measure is necessary to give the President the tools to penalize the Iranian regime for its continual refusal to heed the objections of the international community.

I encourage my colleagues who have not already expressed support for H.R. 1905 to join me in support of the bill.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,060,274,082,298.88. We've added \$10,258,868,907,004.60 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, in June 2010 President Obama signed into law the most far-reaching and carefully targeted sanctions ever imposed on Iran. Later that same month, the Administration also succeeded in bringing the United Nations Security Council to issue further, multilateral sanctions. In May, the United Nations issued a report demonstrating that these multilateral sanctions were having a serious, deleterious impact on Iran's ability to pursue nuclear weapons.

The reason these sanctions are having such an impact is that they have garnered the cooperation of allies around the world, who saw that this Administration was willing to engage Iran. If those allies now deem that we are turning back from that posture of engagement, and returning to the unilateralism of the Bush Administration, I am concerned that our effort to isolate the Iranian regime will collapse. It is the comprehensive diplomacy of the Obama Administration that has unified our European allies and brought them on board. That could end.

And in addition, the sanctions called for by H.R. 1905, are less targeted and more indiscriminate. They will have an impact, but that impact will not be directly related to our justified concern over human rights or Iran's nuclear military goals. Rather, they would hurt Iranians of all walks of life, including those we hope will become an effective opposition to